



[Mao Zedong, 1893-1976](#)

People's Democratic Dictatorship

Ten years after the 1939 publication of Mao's near-perfect example of the way to lay out the Political Economy of a country, given in the previous instalment, the same Mao stood in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, on 1 October 1949, to declare the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Also in 1949, Mao wrote of the People's Democratic Dictatorship in a document linked below (please download it).

In it he rehearsed some of the history, for example:

“Imperialist aggression shattered the fond dreams of the Chinese about learning from the West. It was very odd - why were the teachers always committing aggression against their pupil? The Chinese learned a good deal from the West, but they could not make it work and were never able to realize their ideals. Their repeated struggles, including such a country-wide movement as the Revolution of 1911, all ended in failure. Day by day, conditions in the country got worse, and life was made impossible.”

In 2015, Africans can still feel the truth of these words in relation to their own experience.

In 2015, sixty-six years after the revolution, China is still called a People’s Republic, and not a socialist republic. Why is this? How is it constituted?

The Chinese nation is constructed in terms of its political economy. Mao is very clear about this, for example in the following passage:

“Who are the people? At the present stage in China, they are the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. These classes, led by the working class and the Communist Party, unite to form their own state and elect their own government; they enforce their dictatorship over the running-dogs of

*imperialism - the landlord class and bureaucrat-bourgeoisie, as well as the representatives of those classes, the Kuomintang reactionaries and their accomplices - suppress them, allow them only to behave themselves and not to be unruly in word or deed. If they speak or act in an unruly way, they will be promptly stopped and punished. Democracy is practised within the ranks of the people, who enjoy the rights of freedom of speech, assembly, association and so on. The right to vote belongs only to the people, not to the reactionaries. **The combination of these two aspects, democracy for the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries, is the people's democratic dictatorship.***

In 2009, according to information from a Chinese delegation then touring South Africa, the number of people living in the rural areas of China was still 800 million, but the number of people in Chinese cities was by then 500 million, an enormous increase on the three million “modern industrial workers” counted by Mao in 1939.

The South African NDR

As we become more aware of what is happening, it becomes apparent that the National Democratic Revolution should never be seen as a regrettable compromise, or as a temporary or an interim measure, or even as a stage, if a stage means a halt.

The National Democratic Revolution is a positive,

revolutionary move forward. It is the only direct move forward that is possible, in our circumstances, that can be accomplished in a conscious, peaceful, deliberate and rational way. This is because the NDR corresponds to the political economy of the country, and because development is class struggle.

The National Democratic Revolutions cannot fully be defined by a set of tick-boxes next to self-justifying stand-alone goods such as “non-racial”, “non-sexist” and “unified”, as much as those things may be desirable in the abstract.

The nature of the NDR and its consequent trajectory can only be properly seen in the light of Political Economy. The NDR should always be defined, and from time to time if necessary redefined, in relation to a specific class alliance for unity-in-action.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [People's Democratic Dictatorship, 1949, Mao Zedong](#).
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